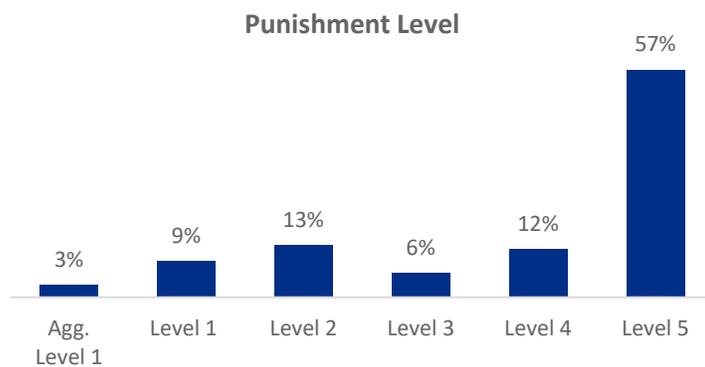


FISCAL YEAR 2021

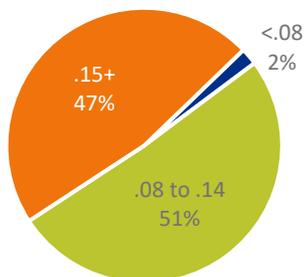
- ⇒ There were 21,240 sentences imposed for DWI convictions in FY 2021, fewer than in pre-COVID-19 pandemic years due to the impact on court operations.
- ⇒ The majority of DWI convictions were in Level 5 (57%).
- ⇒ Most offenders convicted of DWI received probation (94%).



Offender Characteristics

- Most DWI offenders were male (75%).
- 56% of offenders were White, 28% were Black, 11% were Hispanic, and 5% were Other.
- The average age at offense was 37 years old.
- Of offenders with a BAC recorded (75%), almost half had a BAC of .15 or more (47%).

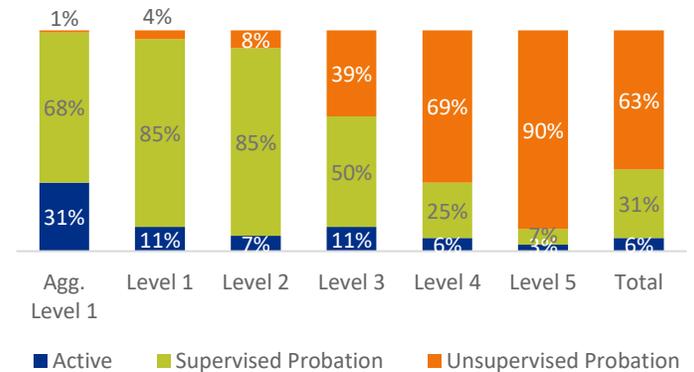
Blood Alcohol Content (BAC)



Punishment

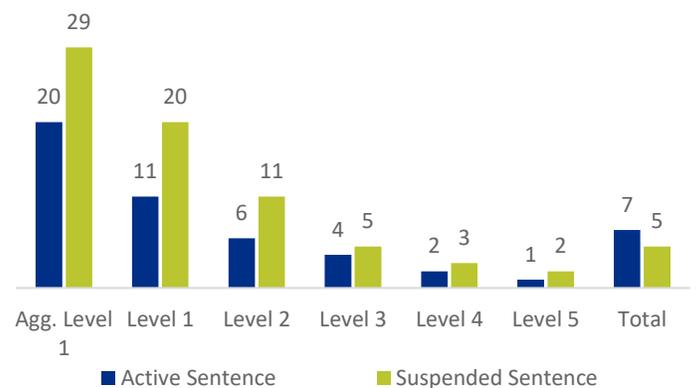
- 6% of DWI convictions resulted in an active sentence, 31% resulted in supervised probation, and 63% resulted in unsupervised probation.
- Aggravated Level 1 had the highest percentage of active sentences (31%); Level 5 had the highest percentage of unsupervised probation (90%).

Type of Sentence Imposed by Punishment Level



- Aggravated Level 1 offenders had the longest active sentences (20 months).
- For all punishment levels, the average active sentence length was approximately half of the statutory maximum.

Average Sentence Imposed (Months) by Punishment Level



- Probation was imposed for all 19,997 DWI convictions with a suspended sentence; two-thirds (67%) received unsupervised probation.
- The average probation term was 18 months for supervised and 13 months for unsupervised probation.
- Special probation was ordered for 28% of offenders with probation; nearly all Aggravated Level 1 sentences (97%) included special probation.
- Fines were imposed for 84% of offenders who received probation with an average fine of \$201.

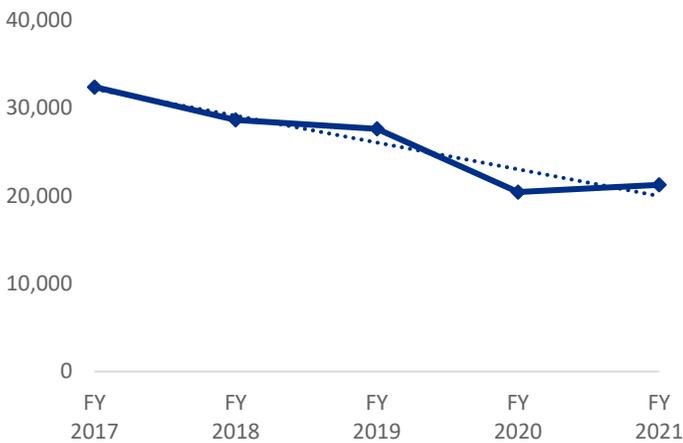
QUICK FACTS: DWI CONVICTIONS

FISCAL YEAR 2017 – FISCAL YEAR 2021

DWI convictions have been declining since FY 2017 (from 32,359 to 21,240 in FY 2021); the largest decline occurred from FY 2019 to FY 2020 (26%) due to the postponement of certain court proceedings in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. DWI convictions increased 4% from FY 2020 to FY 2021.

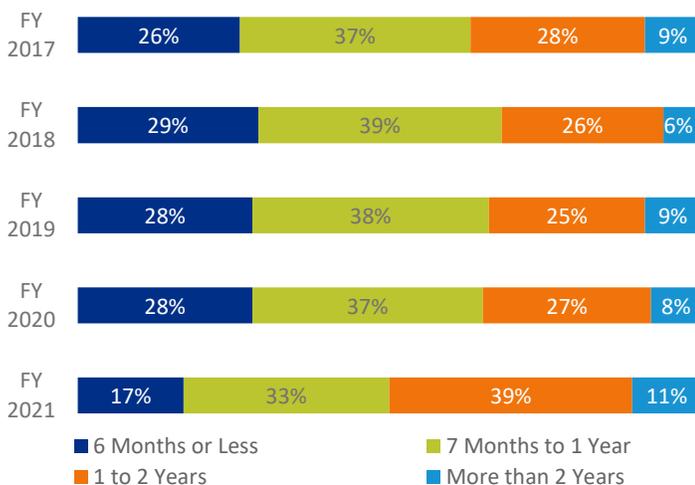
The distribution of DWI convictions by punishment level and punishment type were similar in FY 2017 and FY 2021. Over half of convictions were for Level 5 offenses, ranging from 56% to 57% per year. The largest proportion of offenders received unsupervised probation.

DWI Convictions

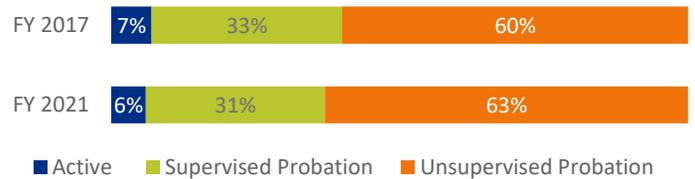


The pandemic has affected time to sentencing for DWI convictions with fewer DWI cases disposed in 1 year or less (50% in FY 2021 compared to a high of 68% in FY 2018). About 90% were disposed within 2 years or less across all years. The median time to sentencing was also longer for FY 2021 (13 months) compared to previous years (range from 9 to 10 months).

Time to Sentencing

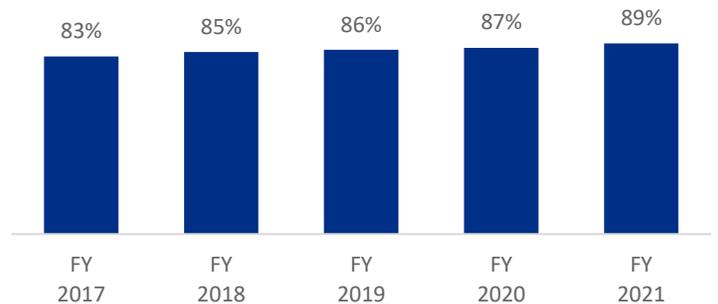


Type of Punishment



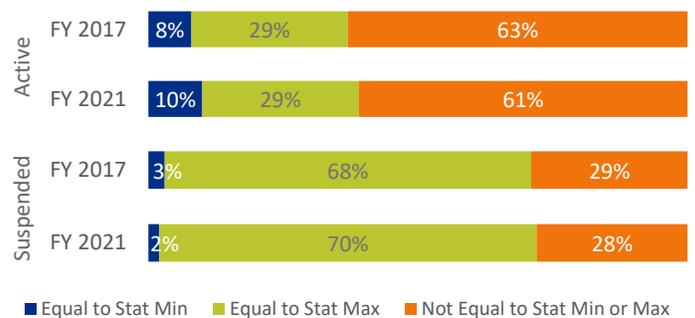
The percentage of cases disposed by guilty pleas has been increasing (89% in FY 2021 compared to 83% in FY 2017).

Dispositions by Guilty Pleas



Relative to the statutory minimum and maximums, sentences imposed were similar in FY 2017 and FY 2021. Across all years, the sentence lengths for suspended sentences were nearly equal to the statutory maximum.

Sentence Length Relative to the Statutory Minimum and Maximum Sentences



SOURCE: NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, FY 2017 – FY 2021 DWI Statistical Report Data

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The Honorable Charlie Brown, Chairman
Michelle Hall, Executive Director

For the NC Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission's *DWI Statistical Report* and all other publications, see the Commission's website: www.NCSPAC.org.